

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 IO-06 AF-04 NSC-05 NSCE-00
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O R 211038Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0620
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 2232

LIMDIS

USUN FOR LOWENSTEIN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PFOR, CG, MZ, SF, PO
SUBJECT: MARIO SOARES' CONCERN RE SOUTHERN AFRICA

REF: A) LISBON 1751 B) LISBON 0688

SUMMARY: SOARES TOLD ALLARD LOWENSTEIN HE FEARED THAT
CURRENT EVENTS IN ZAIRE WERE PART OF ORCHESTRATED USSR-
CUBAN OFFENSIVE THAT COULD HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN
PORTUGAL. BOTH THE PCP AND THE FAR RIGHT WERE EXPLOITING
THE SITUATION. HE HELD NO BRIEF FOR MOBUTU, BUT NOTED
HE HAD SURVIVED A NUMBER OF CRISES, AND THAT FRANCE AND
BELGIUM INTENDED TO BACK HIM FULLY. THE US SHOULD FOLLOW
A SUBTLE POLICY: ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA REGIME
TO "EXPLOIT ITS CONTRADICTIONS," RECOGNIZING IT FOR WHAT
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IT IS--ALIGNED WITH THE USSR; AND AT THE SAME TIME FIND
WAYS TO WORK WITH THOSE ELEMENTS THAT COULD CHANGE THE
SITUATION. HE MADE NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN ANGOLAN AND
MOZAMBICAN REGIMES IN THEIR EXTERNAL ALIGNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. SOARES MET FOR OVER AN HOUR MARCH 19 WITH ALLARD
LOWENSTEIN, CHIEF OF THE US DELEGATION TO UN COMMISSION

ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND AN OLD FRIEND WITH WHOM HE HAS KEPT IN CLOSE CONTACT. I ACCOMPANIED LOWNSTEIN. MUCH OF THE CONVERSATION WAS DEVOTED TO AN EXPRESSION OF SOARES' CONCERN OVER SOUTHERN AFRICAN SITUATION AND ITS POTENTIAL RAMIFICATIONS IN PORTUGAL.

2. USSR-CUBAN EXPANSIONISM: SOARES' CENTRAL THEME WAS THAT ZAIRE INVASION WAS PART OF AN ORCHESTRATED USSR-CUBAN MANEUVER, AND THAT PORTUGAL FIGURED IN THEIR DESIGNS. HE REFERRED TO CASTRO'S REQUEST TO STOP HERE EN ROUTE TO LIBYA AS A DELIBERATE EFFORT TO STIR UP UNREST IN PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES WHO RESENTED FACT THAT CUBAN FORCES HAD REPLACED THEM IN ANGOLA (REF A). IT WAS OBVIOUSLY NO ACCIDENT THAT CASTRO WAS NOW APPEARING IN LUANDA AT THE TIME THE INVASION WAS TAKING PLACE.

3. PORTUGAL, KATANGA, AND THE PCP: SOARES TRACED PORTUGAL'S LINKS WITH KATANGA GENDARMES FROM DAYS WHEN SALAZAR SUPPORTED TSHOMBE AND PROVIDED GENDARMES SANCTUARY AFTER UN TERMINATED SECESSION. FOLLOWING PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION, MOBUTU HAD PRESSED GOP TO SURRENDER GENDARMES TO HIM BUT GOP REFUSED, KNOWING THEY WOULD BE KILLED. FACT THAT GENDARMES WERE NOW BEING MANIPULATED BY MPLA AND CUBANS WOULD CREATE TENSIONS AMONG REFUGEES HERE. THESE TENSIONS WOULD BE EXPLOITED BY BOTH THE FAR RIGHT AND THE PCP (WHICH SOARES HAS SAID IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS HAS ITS EYES ON AGAIN PROVOKING THE FAR RIGHT INTO ACTS OF FOLLY). HE NOTED THE COMMUNIST PRESS HAD BEEN SO GEARED UP FOR CASTRO'S VISIT THEY RAN THEIR ARTICLES ON CUBA EVEN THOUGH GOP CONFIDENTIAL

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REFUSED HIM PERMISSION TO LAND. HE ALSO LINKED FORTH-COMING COMMUNIST-INSPIRED ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE IN PORTUGAL WITH TROUBLED AFRICAN SCENE (REF B). PORTUGAL IS FULFILLING ITS FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS ON CABORA BASSA DAM WHICH MAKE NO SENSE IF SOME CONTACT CANNOT CONTINUE BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE, SOUTH AFRICA, AND PORTUGAL. SOARES SAID HE IS AS OPPOSED TO APARTHEID AS ANYONE BUT DIDN'T WANT THE ISSUE EXPLOITED HERE BY THE PCP.

4. SAVIMBI, THE FAR RIGHT AND MERCENARIES: COMPLICATING THE SITUATION WAS CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR SAVIMBI AND ROBERTO BY THE PORTUGUESE RIGHT, AND, IN THE CASE OF THE FORMER, BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. MERCENARIES WERE BEING RECRUITED IN PORTUGAL AND THE SITUATION WAS BEING EXPLOITED BY GALVAO DE MELO WHO HAS VISITED ANGOLA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 2232

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CLANDESTINELY TWICE RECENTLY. (FYI GALVAO DE MELO, A RETIRED AIR FORCE GENERAL IS AN INDEPENDENT RIGHT-WING DEPUTY WHO WAS EXPELLED OVER THE WEEKEND FROM THE CDS ASSEMBLY GROUP AS A RESULT OF AN INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE ATTACKED THE CDS LEADERSHIP AND, INTER ALIA, SAID HE WOULD BE GLAD TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INVASION OF ANGOLA. THE IMPLICATION OF SOARES' COMMENTS WAS THAT GALVAO DE MELO AND OTHER RIGHTISTS MIGHT BE ABLE TO BROADEN THEIR POLITICAL BASE HERE IF THE SITUATION IN AFRICA CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE).

5. THE NATURE OF AFRICAN REGIMES: SOARES SAW THE CURRENT ANGOLAN REGIME AS ALIGNED WITH THE USSR AND NOTED IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION THAT HE SAW LITTLE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ANGOLA, AND MOZAMBIQUE. RESPONSE TO ANOTHER
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QUERY, HE CREDITED THE MPLA WITH CONTROLLING JST THE CITIES AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION, AND THIS ONLY BECAUSE

OF THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS. QUESTIONED ON HIS ASSESSMENT OF MOBUTU'S ABILITY TO HOLD OUT, SOARES SAID HE HELD NO PERSONAL BRIEF WHATSOEVER FOR MOBUTU, BUT NOTED HE HAD SURVIVED A LOT LONGER THAN ANYONE BELIEVED POSSIBLE AND THE BELGIANS AND FRENCH WOULD BACK HIM TO THE HILT.

6. US POLICY: ASKED FOR OBSERVATIONS ON WHAT THE US MIGHT DO SOARES SAID THE SITUATION CALLED FOR GREAT SUBTLETY. THE US HAD SOMEHOW TO WORK WITH THOSE WHO COULD CHANGE THE SITUATION, BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT SHOULD HAVE RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA TO "EXPLOIT THE INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS," ALWAYS RECOGNIZING THE ANGOLA REGIME FOR WHAT IT IS--ALIGNED WITH THE USSR. SOARES SAID HE WOULD FOLLOW THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND KEEP US INFORMED, AS HE HAS DONE TO DATE.

7. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, SOARES HAS CONSISTENTLY HINTED (BY OFFERING TO ACT AS INTERMEDIARY) THAT US SHOULD ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA. IN THIS CONVERSATION HE WAS HARSHER AND MORE POINTED THAN USUAL IN HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE NATURE OF THE ANGOLAN (AND BY INFERENCE MOZAMBICAN) REGIMES. THIS SHOULD BE READ IN THE LIGHT OF SOARES' BELIEF AND WORRY THAT THE AFRICAN CONFLICTS WILL ADD TO THE ALREADY HEAVY PRESSURES WEIGHING ON HIM FROM BOTH THE EXTREME LEFT AND THE EXTREME RIGHT IN PORTUGAL. IN THIS CONNECTION HE NOTED THAT THE THESIS IS STILL CURRENT IN PORTUGAL--MAINLY IN CONSERVATIVE CIRCLES--THAT THE COMMUNIST DRIVE FOR POWER HERE WAS ONLY A SPRINGBOARD TO GREATER THINGS IN AFRICA. SAORES DID NOT IMPLY HE AGREED WITH THIS THESIS, BUT ONLY THAT THOSE WHO DID WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BECOME EMOTIONALLY AROUSED BY CURRENT AFRICAN EVENTS, AND THIS WAS THE LAST THING HE NEEDED AT THIS POINT. IT WAS UNCLEAR EXACTLY WHOM SOARES HAD IN MIND IN REFERRING

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TO ELEMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA THAT "CAN CHANGE THE SITUATION." IF DEPARTMENT WISHES I CAN EXPLORE THIS FURTHER WITH SOARES. IN ANY EVENT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO SHARE WITH HIM ANY ASSESSMENT WE MIGHT HAVE OF THE SITUATION.

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